

The Argumente of D. Erasmus of Rotterdame vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter.



Deerly wryeth to the Jewes that dwelt here and there in the
 coastes of the Seales (as James had an Epistle, no doubt)
 worthy the chief of the Apostles, which is full of 3 apostolike
 autoritie and maiestie, and is composed in fewe wordes,
 but full of sentences. He exhorteth manie partentles to beate
 the cruell, that they suffred for maiestie of the gospell, in hope
 of reward. He exhorteth them, that accordyng
 to the Prophetes mentioned saynges, beyng freely called to so high digni-
 tie, they repelle a life worthy of their profession. So; he sayth, christianitie
 consisteth not in title o; baptisme onely, but in innocencie of maners: for in
 that they are otherwyse afflicted with sorowes, it maketh nothing to the
 glory of Christ, if they appeare manifestly to suffer, so; naughtie dedes do-
 ing. Furthermoze he admonissheth such as come in to christianitie, that they
 refuse not to obey magistrates, though they bee heathens, lest beyng pro-
 uoked they can neyther be converted to Christ, but become more leaue and
 cruell. Also that seruauntes deape not their duettie to their masters, though
 they be heathens. For the office of christian goodnes is, to suffer al thynges.
 Furthermoze he admonissheth the christian women that they contemne not
 their husbandes though they be heathens, but study by their owne maners
 to prouoke them vnto better. He warneth the husbandes to beate with
 their wyues, and to absterne somtymes from hauing to do with them, so as
 they may the more apply them selues to prayer. Than he prouoketh men af-
 ter the example of Christ, to suffer displeasures, and not to ymagine howe to
 requyte wronge with wronge, but to beuise howe to overcome their cruell
 doers with softenes and well doynge. And these matters he treateth of in
 the first Chapter and in the beginning of the fourth. After these he ex-
 horteth men vnto newnesse of life and dissuadeth from the heathens
 vices. He allureth men vnto sobrynesse, vnto watching, to continual
 prayers, and aboue other vnto mutuall charytie vnto hospitali-
 tie and to do good turnes one for an other. Agayne he enticeth
 men patiently to suffer persecutions, layd vpon them
 for Christs name sake. Than he informeth bishops,
 and in them the people vnder their charge. In
 the ende he repositeth that he wrote an other
 epistle vnto them by Siluanus, which
 was loste. This epistle it appeareth
 he wrote from Babilo, for in the
 name
 of that churche he salueth them, if
 any man allowe not the
 vnderstanding of
 Rome by Ba-
 bilon.

The paraphrase of D. Erasmus of Rotterdam vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter.

Peter an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to them that dwell here and there as strangers throughout Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, direct according to the foreknowledge of God the father, that showe the sanctifying of the spirit vnto obedience, and sympathizing of the bloud of Iesus Christ. Grace be with you and peace be multiplied.



Peter somtyme a discipule and a conynuall guest, but nowe an Embassadant and Apostle of Iesu Christ, to all them that dwell here and there in the coastes of litell Asia, at Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, and in that parte that is properly named Asia, whiche the Ephesians haue, and Bithynia, whome either the stormy tempestes of warres haue in tyme paste scattered abroade some to one place some to an other, or elles whome the raging crueltie of them, which haue the name of Christe, hathe quitelesly driven out of the places where their fathers dwelt before them: and are by that meanes now comfortles amonge straunge nations, as it were banished men, being in deede for feare of men, thrust out of their natyue countrey, but yett not excluded ne banished, neither deppryued frome the aduice of whospeere preaching, which God the prince of all men bestowed chiefly vnto the lande and nation of Iewes, after suche a sorte, that he woulde for all that haue it commune to all them, whome soeuer he hath chosen. For lyke as these are neuer the better for being home and leading their life at Iherusalem, whiche yett they haue by the doctrine of Iesus Christ: euen so shal it defende no man, in that he dwelleth amonge the vnconuerted and prophane Gentiles, so that in steede of Moses lawe he embrace the grace of the gospell. For it is not the obseruation of the lawe, wherewith the Iewes are communely punished by, that bringeth true saluacion, neither kyndred to any place, but the free election of God. He is a right Iewe in deede, whiche what countrey soeuer he dwell in, or what kyndred soeuer he is borne of, acknowledgeth Iesus Christe to be the autour of true saluacion, which dyed not for one nation of people alone, but for the whole vniuersall world. But in so much as we so acknowledge him, we are not indebted to the merite of obseruing the lawe, but vnto the free goodnesse of God, whiche chooseth out of all maner of nations, a calleteth vnto the libéral freedome of the gospell, whome soeuer it standeth with hys pleasure to call vnto it. For it needes come of late sodainly into hys mynde, to saue all maner of mortal men by thys meane, ne yett enioyned with our wel doinges, he sayth this by as a reward for vs, as though we had so merited, but this was decreed of god the father by his eternal counsaill, that he woulde open the porte of saluacion, not to the Iewes only, but to all nations vniuersally: not by circumcision, not by keeping of custome of the sabboth, neither by choise of meates, ne yett by other ceremonies of Moses lawe, which are corporall matters, a nothing but certain shadowes of spiritual thinges that were geue for a tyme: but by true sanctification of the spirit, whiche the spiritual lawe of the gospell geneth vnto vs, by the which we are truly purged in deede

In dede from all oure synnes, not so; because we haue obserued the pre-
 scripes of the olde law, but because we playnly & readily put our trust in
 the promises of the gospell: not by sprinkling of the blood of a calfe, as
 it hath been hitherto wont to be done according to the custome of the law,
 but by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the undefiled and most ac-
 ceptable sacrifice to God, Iesus Christ: whose undefeuted death wyperth
 cleane awaye from vs, all the transgressions of oure former conuersacion
 once so; as, and after we be borne a new, as it were, into him through bap-
 tisme, it restoreth vs vnto a new life. And so;asmuch as baptism hath ex-
 empted vs from this world, & engrafted vs into the participacion of hea-
 uenly rewardes, I will not pray for those goodes (in getting and heaping
 together wherof the toylers of the world thinke themselves fortunare) but
 those goodes rather, which purge vs cleane from earthly contagious in-
 fections, and make vs worthy the prince of heauen Christ: that is to say,
 Grace, that in distrustyng your owne merites, and in puttyng no confidēce
 in the ceremonies of the lawe, you may looke for true saluation of the fre
 bounteous liberalitie of God, and in puttyng vnfaigned trust in the gos-
 pell: And besides this I wishe Peace, that being freely reconciled to God
 by the blood of Christ, you may haue concord both among your selves
 and with all other, not only hurring no body, but also pardonynge other
 mennes faultes, and requiryng good curses for euill: the chaunce of
 which goodes lyke as you haue freely receyued of God, euen so it shalbe
 you in hand to apply your selves vnto godly studies, that you may wate
 riche in the increasing vsury of good workes, more and more, not onely
 persistyng stedfast in that you haue begonne, but also going forward day-
 ly better and better, vntill the day come wherin the rewardes of immorta-
 litie shalbe openly geuen, wherof you haue now conceiued a certayne assu-
 red hope out of the gospell of Christ, that we should thereby challenge
 no praise vnto our selves.

Wolde he God the father of our Lord Iesus Christ, which according to his abun-
 dant mercy begate vs agayne vnto a iuely hope: by that that Iesus Christ rose agayne The text.
 from dead; to an inheritance immortal and vncorrupt, and that pertheth not, restu-
 red in heauen for you, which is kept by the power of Gods tholome sayth, vnto saluati-
 on, which is prepared already to be shewed in the last time, in the which ye receyue, though
 now so; a fraile; if ye be requyre; ye are in heuines, thow manyfold temptacions, that
 the repall of your sayth being muche more precious then golde that pertheth (though it
 be tryed with fyre) might be founde vnto laude, glory and honoure, at the apperyng of Je-
 sus Christ, whom ye haue not seen, and yet loue him: in whom euen now, though ye see
 him not, yet doe you beleeue, and reioyce with ioy vnspeakable, and glayous seeinge the
 ende of your sayth, euen the saluacion of your soules.

For this so; passyng a great benefite, his liberalitie is to be payed, of
 whom by Christ cometh vnto vs, whatsoeuer it be that maketh vs truly
 blessed. And that is not Moses, but God himselfe, & the same the father of
 our Lord Iesus Christ, which (whan we were lyke fortunarely borne of
 Adam, that is to say borne to synne, borne to death) hath begotten vs new
 agayne into innocencie, and hath begotten vs vnto life that neuer shall dye,
 being prouoked by no merites of ours, but mered freely of his owne mee-
 re wherin he most chiefly extendeth: and this hath he done not by payde
 of Moses lawe, but by the costeous gyfte of his owne sone Iesus Christ,
 whom he would haue to suffer death, so thintert, where we were els de-

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perate wretches, he might deliuer vs fro the tyranny of Sinne & death: And him he called anon fro death to lyfe, that we beyng in this world dead to worldly lustes, & hauing remembrance as it were before our eyes of the resurrecció, after his exámple in vprightnes of conuersacion, might haue an assured & a ready hope, that we also shal once be exempt out of these sorowes & attaine with Christ vnto þe euerslasting inheritaunce, whiche lyke as he beyng our head hath already attayned, so shal al we also folowe as many as be engrafted to þe members of Christ, & are made worthy by folowing of his exámple, to be called his brethren, & the chyldre of þe selfe same father that he is: that like as we suffer common afflictions with him, so should we haue reward also together wth him. As long as we were the sonnes of the synfull Adam, an infourmate inheritaunce abode vs. But as sone as we were made þe sonnes of God, we make speedy haste to þe inheritaunce of heauen. For it becometh, þe seing we are borne from heauen, we should behold beautifull thinges, & seing we are borne of God, we should feele nothing but godlines. They þe seeue the world goe about to haue rewardes þe are transitory & wage that is slipperey: but for vs there remaineth þe happye inheritaunce after these temperal afflictions, which can neither be corrupted with death, ne defiled with wearines or heauines, ne yet fade away by age or rustines. There is no cause for vs to be stayed of, lest any man should in the meane while take this so plentiful an heritage out of our handes. We haue an assured saythfull promyse maker: And in his hidden it is safely kept & layed up in store for vs in heauen: howbeit after suche sorte, that for al that there must an assured hope, and as it were a certayne pledge remaine in the meane tyme with men vpon earth, not with al maner of men, but wth you & such like as you are, vnto whom the spirite of Christ is geuen in steede of a gage: & which, albeit ye are for þe tyme tossed on euery syde wth sondry stormes of sorowes, þe feallitie of man is bitterly vnable of himselfe to beate out, yet by the succour of God, which is mighty wth al thinges, you are preserved, not through your owne merites, but by fayth & vnfained trust: whereby you doubt not, but fro the last tyme, after þe which there shal be no more of this confusion of humayne matters, but the euill me being appointed to their tormentes shal be hab'le to do no body harme, & the good being safe fro al inuasions of sorowes shal haue the fruition of euerslasting rest. For now þe rewardes lye hidde, & many times after the common peoples estimació, thei are in worse condició þe be of þe better, & those seeme to perissh which are most specially in safegarde, & thei seeme to flourish which most chiefly goe to naught. In this world there is tyme to exercise godlines, & the reward hath his tyme prescribed vnto it, which it behoueth not to preuent. In þe meane season let it be ynough for vs, þe euerslasting felicitie is kept in safegarde for vs, which neither man nor deuill can be hab'le to take away fro vs before hand, so þe we thinke not from þe fayth, wherby we ought to condene mortal mens matters, & depende wholly of heauen. Let there be in þe meane season scarce folkes, which being rebels to god, trust to the aydes of þe world, let the for þe tyme stampe & stare out you as though you wer overcome & left succourles. But when þe day shal come, & the discourse of thinges turned vpon side down, they shal be to mēred, & you shal refoyce like conquereours, yea you ought to reioyce eue now also through þe vnboubred lokig for of so passig & great felicitie. For it ought not to seme

into you a greate; a greuous matter, though by afflictions and griefes
 that are but shoyte and shall soone haue an ende, you come to the blessednesse
 that neuer shall decaye. And perchance the'se persecutions also shall once
 haue an end, which not withstanding as often as they come in vze, are to be
 borne with a myghtye stoue stomacke, and without dismayng fo; the glo;ry
 of God, in hope of the lyfe to come. Fo; after suche wyse doeth the wyse ones
 of God in prouiding fo; your commodities permitte, that the sinceritie and
 stedfastnes of your faith may be tried throug sondy; assaultes of so;owes.
 Fo; yf golde (which elles were a thing both lost and would goe to naught)
 be tryed out not only by the touche stone, but also is assayed by the fire, to
 thintente it may ethencefo;th bee had in so muche the mo;e pryce as it is the
 mo;e exactly tynd; much mo;e wil God haue your faith, wherunto so high
 honour of duerte belongeth, to be tried with sondy; experimentes, to thint
 tent that when it shal glister out of these flames of so;owes and afflictions,
 and bring fatte mo;e pure and mo;e glittering than any golde though it be
 neuer so fyne, it may be p;ecious in the syght of God, and that all the marres
 at length may grow in to cleane contrary condition: that is to wete, that the
 thyng which seemed to be layd vpon you in this wo;ld be unto reproche, may
 chaunce vnto prayse: and that which seemed vnto vslany, may be turned vnto
 to glo;ry: that whiche seemed to be layd vpon you to put you to dishoneste,
 may be turned in to habundaunce of honour in that day, when Iesus Ch;ist,
 whose power wo;rketh nowe in you by secreete meanes, shal shewe fo;th him
 selfe openly vnto all men, and sende vnto euery man rewards accordyng
 to hys desertes. Fo; what is a mo;e glo;rious thyng, than to be praysed of
 Ch;istes owne mouthe: when you shall heare: Come you blessed of my father
 what thyng is mo;e honorable than to be receaued of God the father into
 the felowshippe of the kyngdome of heauen together with the sonne? But
 thys glo;ry, although it shall be the comen glo;ry of all godly folkes, yet it
 shall chaunce mo;e haboundauntly vnto them, that haue suffered greater
 thynges vpon earth fo; Ch;istes sake. Whiche rewards in case they were
 nowe p;esently appaent, the strength of saythe woulde bee no maruelous
 matter. But nowe the special chiefe prayse of good folkes consisteth in this
 point, that where you neuer sawe Ch;ist with your bodyly eyes, yet with the
 eyes of sayth you see him and loue him: and wher as the violence of so;owes
 doeth openly & p;esently geare vpon you, but the rewardes, which are kept
 till a daye, doe not nowe appaere, yet puttyng assured confidence in hys
 promisses, you suffre these thynges with none other stomacke, than yf the
 glo;ry were p;esently furnished before your eyes, neither doe you suffre only
 with boldnesse, but also in the myde of afflictions you reioyce with an vn-
 speakable ioy, beyng ful of glo;ry before God, that is to say, of a well hoping
 conscience, and full of a certayne vnfeyned confidre, that where you suffre
 suche thynges vndersexably, you shall, by the will of God, haboundauntly
 receiue a great fruyte of your sayth, that is to wete, the eternall saluation
 of your soules. Fo; it is a great vantage, when through the loosyng of
 the mo;rtall body the immo;rtall soule is p;eserued. Thus it was decreed by
 the eternal counsaile of God, that menne should acceptne saluation by these
 meanes, wherby euen Ch;ist hymselfe came to euertlasting blessednesse.

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The texts. Of which situation haue the p̄phetes enquired and searched, which prophesied of the
 grace that should come vnto you, searching when as at what tyme the spirit of Christ
 (which was in them) should signify, which spirit testified before, the passions that should
 happen vnto Christ, and the glory that should follow after: vnto which p̄phetes it is as
 also declared, that not vnto them selues, but vnto vs, they should minister the thynges
 which are now meted vnto you of them, which, by the ho. r̄ ghost sent downe from hea-
 uen) haue in the gospel preached vnto you the thynges, which the Lucys desire to behold.

For these matters are not by chaunce brought to passe at all adventures,
 but the selfe same thyng that we haue alreadye seene, the olde p̄phetes
 (which prophesied before hand that you should be saued through faith and
 the grace of the gospell without the ayde of Moses lawe) haue diligently
 sought and searched out, not being contented to see as it were through a
 myste what should be to come: but they haue also with a godly curiositie
 searched out of the spirit of Christ, which then presently signified vnto the
 by secret inspiration, what Christ should suffer, and vnto what excellent
 glory he should by and by be aduanced vnto, than what or what manner of
 tyme that should come to passe; for so muche as they myndes were vhe-
 mently desirous of his sauing helth. And vnto them it was also manifested,
 that these thynges, which they prophesied before hand should come to passe,
 should not be exhibited in their tymes, but in yours: and the thynges that
 they opened in their prophesies, they opened vnto you a not to them selues.
 In deed they would haue wished to see, that you haue chaunced to see: but
 they prophesies were spoken before to chintent that we apostles should be
 more certainly credited, which declare now vnto you the thynges alreadye
 done, that they had spoken before hande should come to passe. And that you
 should also not stande in doubt, the same spirit of Christ in tymes past
 taught them with secret still inspirations, what he had determined to doe,
 which lately cyming downe from heauen in sp̄ie tongues instructed vs, to
 chintent we should be preachers in al the whole world of the thynges that
 are come to passe. For we preache Christ that became man so; al our saluacio
 sake, was conuersant on earth, was afflicted with reproches a tormentes,
 finally was nayled on the crosse, suffered death for our sakes, and anon rais-
 ed agayne to lyfe, was exalted vnto heauen, where now he glisteth in ma-
 iestic and glory with the father (which before seued vpon earth) to be but a
 vile rascall and an abiect) and thither also will he exalte those that his be.
 These matters inasmuch as they were done by the vspeakable counsaill of
 God, it is no maruell though the p̄phetes desired to see them, seying it is
 so excellently pleasant and acceptable a sight euen to the angels them selues
 to loke vpon, in the beholding wherof they can not be fulfilled. The greater
 the benefite is which is offered vnto you, the more greedily you ought to em-
 brace it, that it be not through your owne fault that you attayne it not. The
 reward is certain, but it shall be your duties so; all that, to behaue your
 selues so, that you seeke not vnworthy the promises. The day that is looked
 for, will come, which shall openly bying forth the rewardes both of the god-
 ly and of the vngodly. It will come once, whansoever it shall be, and it shall
 come pleasant and happy to suche as it shall fynde readyly prepared: on the
 contrary parte, it shall come fearfully to them that it shall fynde vnfaith-
 full

full sugardes and carelesly mynded.

Wherfore gird vp the lorner of your myndes, be sober, & trust perfectly on the grace that is brought unto you; (by the deceyving of Iesus Christ) as obedient chyldren, that ye geue not your selues ouer unto your olde lustes; by whiche ye were led w^han as yet ye were ignorant of Christ: but as he whiche called you to holy, such so be ye holy also in all maner of conuersation, because it is written. We ye holy, for I am holy. And if so be that ye call on the father, whiche without respect of person subgeth accordyng to every mannes merite, so that ye pass the tyme of your pilgrimage in feare.

And so; inas muche as Christ woulde haue that haue to be vncertayn vnto vs, it behoueth you not to be in a securitie at any tyme, but alwayes hauing the lorner of your myndes girded, as menne readly furnished to mete they; & besides comming watchyng and sober, being alwayes stirred vp and put in mynde with the certayn and sure taking so; of the euerslastyng felicitie, which now is offered vnto all men that obey the Gospell: but yet it shalbe possessed at length, at suche tyme, as our Lorde Iesus Christ shall openly shewe hym maistie vnto al men and vnto angelies and deuyles, howbeit they shall not come to that immortallitie, but onely those that in a maner fo;ecast the same in this worlde, and accordyng to the example of Iesus, bring deade to the lustes of this worlde, styue agayne with him vnto innocencie, and conserue stedfastly in it, like lafull and right true sonnes that trust in the promises of god the father, and do after his prescribed commaunders, and neuer styue agayne into their olde conuersation, whiche than throughe th; igno- rance of the Gospelles doctrine, was endaugered with worldly corrupti- onnes. So; it is conuenient that you diste from them in affectes and ma- ners, from whom you diste in profession. The worlde is naught and from it you are already exempted and engrassed vnto Christ, which is righteous, holy and Innocent, and to this ende are you chosen and called of the father, the fountayne of al holines, that like as you are in your profession, so shoulde you in al your life and beinges, be pure, vpright, and vnb lameable. So; the father will not acknowledge any to be his sonnes, but those that be like ma- nered vnto him. So; in dede this same thing he ment whan he spake to our sanctours. Leuitici the six. Chapter. We ye holy, so; I the lord your God am holy. The puritie of Moses lams could not haue ben enough so; you: to abstene from touching of dead bodyes, to haue your fete washed, to abstene from the acte of matrimony; God will haue all our conuersation and all our whole harte to be free from al spotted of synnes. So; in dede the; are the thinges, that make vs playnly impure in the sight of god. And although you call vpon God by the name of a father, cryeng so; his helpe in al thinges, yet if you styue in a filthy conuersation, you may not trust that he wil be mercifull vnto you, or acknowledge you so; his chyldren, seynt he euereth no man ept he so; his kynded or so; his estates sake, but onely after the merites of his conuersation. So; neether shal the Jewe be pure, if his conscience be defiled, ne yet shal the vnicircumcised be vnpure, if he leade a godly and an innocent life.

So; as muche as ye knowe well that ye were not redoubt with corruptible thinges, as The sc;e-
siluer and gold: from your vaine conuersation, whiche ye receaue by the tradition of
the father: but with the precious bloude of Christ, as of a lambe vnbefiled, and without
spot, whiche was offered before hande such before the world was made: but was
disturbe

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declared in the last tymes for your sakes, which by his meanes do beleeue on god, that can-
sed him up from death, and glorified hym, that ye might haue faith and hope towards
God, euen so which haue purified your soules that olde filthye, in obeying the truth,
with brotherly loue vnsayned, so that ye loue one another with a pure hearte feruently, for
ye are holie a newe, not of mortall seed, but of immortal, by the word of god, which truth
and lasteth for euer. For al flesh is grasse, and all the glory of man is as the floure of grasse,
the grasse withereth, and the floure falleth awaye, but the worde of the Lord endureth
euer. And this is the worde, which by the gospel was preached vnto you.

Therefore it comyneth that you which are desirous to haue this fathers mee-
cifull vnto you, haue his vnauoydable iudgement alwayes befoze your eyes,
while you liue in this exile, & so order your conuersatio, that there be nothing
wherfoze the father may be offended, & iustlye cast you out of the inheritance
of the celestiall countrey, as vnnaturall & disobedient children. The greater
the price is, wherewith Christe hath feely redeemed you, so muche the greater
hede ought you to take, lest so; your wilfulnes and vnhankesnes, you be
turned agayn into your former bonde thraldom. There is none more mys-
table a bondage, than to bee the slaue of synne. Those that for a litle money
are made free fro their masters bondage, & become of bondme seemen, watch
about them by al meanes, lest so; their vnhankesnes they may be drawen
ngayne into the bondage that they were in befoze: and will you than commit
that offence to fall again into sold tyranney, to be willingly the bond slaues
of Moses lawe, & had rather serue vaine obseruaunces, that your elders de-
liuered from one to an other vnto you, than to obey the gospel of God, seing
you knowe that you were deliuered once from them, not with a commune
trifling price, as golde or silver, but with an offering muche more holy than
Moses lawe knoweth of: For you are not made cleane with the blood of a
calf spinkled, but with the precious blood of Iesus Christe who like a labe
cleane without any spette, pure and undefiled from all filthinesse of synne,
was offered for our synnes on the aultare of the crosse. Nether yet was that
done by chaunce at all auentures, but the sonne of God was appointed to
make this sacrifice from euertlasting and befoze the making of the worlde,
that he might through his death reconcile the father vnto vs: howbeit the
secrete deuice and decre of Goddes purposed mynde, which was many long
yeares vnknewen to the worlde, is now at length in these later times open-
ly manifested, and a new matter is set forth befoze mennes eyes to loke vpon
whiche in the purposed mynde of God was not new. And it was geuen for
your saluacion sake, vnto whom Christe that was made man, dyed, and is
preached, bestoweth thus muche, that wher as you had a bayne truste vpon
the ceremonies of the lawe, now distrusting your seines, you must put your
whole trust in God the father: who like as he would haue Christe to dye to
wypp awaye your synnes, euen so hath he rapled him by from death, and
so; the paynfull trauailes of this life which he suffered, he gaue him the glory
of immortalite: to the intent that as you haue beleued that whiche he hath
done, in following his example, you might also trust surely to haue the same
rewards to be bestowed on you, in that you put your whole assuaunce in God,
whiche what he hath already performed in his sonne, the same also will he
vndoubtedly performe in al them, which lyue after such sort, that they may
be worthily accounted among the members of Christ, in to whose body you
are engrafted, (since that you were regenerate through baptisme in to hym.
Befoze that tyme you did after your owne lustes, that is to say, embracing
carnall

cernall shadowes of things in steede of true right things: but now since you haue cleansed your soules, not with the obseruacion of Moses purg-
ing sacrifices, but in that you haue through faith obeyed the truth of the
gospel, whiche by the spyryte of Christe hath purged your consciences,
you must endeouour your selues both to be correspondente vnto the head
Christe in vprightnes of life, and be answerably like vnto the concoide of
the body by an excedyng and a playne brotherly and an vnfeined loue a-
mong your selues: that lyke as Christe loued you not after a common sort,
nor after a carnall maner of loue, such so should you loue euery one other,
with a spiritual loue. New kynred requireth new affection. Before this
tyme you Jewes loued Jewes after a carnall affectionate loue, but now
being by a far other maner regenerate, not of a mortall & euerydayly feede
after the bodye, but of an immortall and a heavenly feede by the worde of
God which lyueth and endureth for euer whose gospel you haue believed) you shall loue the brethren with a heavenly loue. Moses lawe was geuen
for a tyme. But the worde of God hath brought forth the lawe of the
gospel vnto vs, whiche neuer shall perishe. The thing that procedeth from
men is but for a season, but the thing that cometh from heauen, is eternal-
ling, as Esay sayd before: *All flesh is as grasse, and all the glory of man as the floure of the
fylde. The grasse is withered, and his floure fallen away, but the worde of the Lorde endureth for e-
uer.* This is the eternall worde of the eternall father, whom the shadowes
of the former lawe in tymes past paynted out vnto vs, but now he is o-
penly declared by the preachers of the gospel, and not onely vnto you,
but vnto all them that receyue Christe with a sincere vpright faith.

¶ The .ii. Chapter.

When some saye & speke all malitiousnes and all gyle, and sayenousnes, and envy, and all
backbitting: and as newe borne babes, desyre ye that mylke (not of the bodye, but of the soule) which is without
bitternes: that ye may grow therby vnto saluacion: yf so be that ye haue tasted, howe gracious the Lord is, to whom ye come, as vnto a liuing stone, be-
loved of men, but chosen of God and precious: and ye as liuing stones, are made a spiri-
tually built house on holy pisenhood, for to offer vp spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by
Jesus Christe.

The error.



As muche as you are lately borne againe by an heavenly
generacion through the doctrine of the gospel, caste all the
vices of your former conuersacion quyte away from you,
yf there were any malice, yf there were any detraite, yf
there were any holowe heartednesse, yf there were any
envy, yf there were any backbitting or cursed speaking,
and from henceforthe as babes newe borne, greedely couree that mylke,
not of the bodye, but of the soule, the mylke that knoweth no detraite, and
is sive for your age which is more harme lesse than strong, euen the mylke
of the gospels ordinaunce. For the gospels doctrine hath his princi-
ples, it hath his infancye, it hath his dyet mete for weake tender age:
it hath

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

It hath also his farther growings, finally it hath his perfite growe age. Those first things are not to be supped lothely, but greedily, yea and rhythmily: yett yett must you lyngre continually in them, but to procede from them still vnto thinges of more perfection. For in dede it wote curu a strange thing if a man borne of his mother should be alwaies a babe and couet nothing els but mylke. And it behourth you also to wate bigge, tyll you growe vnto perfite saluaciō, and not alwaies to sticke still in making the foundacions, but to rise by litle and litle vnto the perfite buyldyng of the house. For in case (according to the psalme wyrters counsell) you haue tasted that the Lorde Jesus is swete, it is requisite for you to bee prouoked with that taste to sette your appetites vpon greater thinges. In humayne buyldynges, the stones neyther change theyr place ne growe any bigger: But in this buyldyng (which standeth vpon liuing stones) the chiefe principall stone whereof, and the stone that conserueth all the piers, is the liuing and eternal Jesus Christe, whiche of late (after the psalme wyrters prophecyng) was call away of menne, that is to wote of the phariseis, who holding of their temple that should go to naught, had no knowledge of this heavenly building, to wher he was chosen by the iudgement of God, and had in mylke price, there is nothing to hinder, but that it may procede forward to the perfite finishyng of the buyldyng. Therefore you must necessarily goe, through forwarde increase of vertues, vnto Christe the liuing stone, the chosen stone, the stone preciously sette by in the sight of God, that you also being growed vpon such a foundacion may be buylded vpon by litle and litle, vntill you bee made spirituall temples muche more holy than the temple that the Jewes byg of, and in the which temples muche more wholly priesthood is exercised than was used in that temple. For in the leuites and priestes offered by beastes, but in these spirituall temples you your selues offer vp spirituall sacrifices moste acceptable to God, who, as he is a spirite and not a bodye, so doeth he desyre in spirituall sacrifices, that you should nothing mynde the rites of holys now being woyn out through the preaching of the Gospell: in stead of sundrye kyndes of brute beastes, you shew worldly and brutish affectes, lecherous lustes, pryde, wrath, rauce, desyre of reuengement, spot, and couetousnes, and in stead of incense, you offer pure prayeres rising out of the aulter of a pure herte into heauen. These are the sacrifices that are offered at all seasons in the spirituall temple, and are at all tymes acceptably welcome vnto God. For those sacrifices of holys are now all ready growen in to a lothefomnes, as the prophet Esay beareth recorde. But these manner of sacrifices are continually allowed through Jesus Christe, by whose commendacion the diligent seruice doinges of the Christians are acceptable vnto the father

The first.

Wherefore it is contayned also in the scripture beholde I put in Sion a stone to be layed in the chiefe corner, electe and precious, and he that beloueth on him shall not be confounded. Also you therefore whiche be true be is precious: but vnto them whiche be false, the stone whiche the buylders refused, the same is become to be the head of the corner, and a stone that men stumble at, and a rocke wher as they be aduised, whiche stumble at the word, and beleeue not that, when they were sic. But ye are a chollis generation,

a royall

Epistle of St. Peter Cap. ii. Fol. 61r.

no one of mannes carnall nature whom the rebward of heauen hath not
yet seen and yet it is necessary for us to know whether we have received
it or no. For if we have not received it, we must be diligent to receive it
before we come to the end of our lives. For if we have received it, we must
be diligent to keep it, lest we lose it. For if we have not received it,
we must be diligent to receive it before we come to the end of our lives.
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The paraphrase of Erasmus upon the .i. Epistle.

hope shall the wicked and mischeuous doers shewe their face in so straight and so dreadfull a iudgement: Therefore they maye in no wise hope to get any saluation there, to thintent that they also which are tormentted in this world, not for euil doynges but for the will of God, must not trust to them selues, but to their possible powers exercysinge þe workes of godlynes, they shoulde after this sorte put their soules in the handes of God their maker, who of his goodnesse will not suffer it to perishe that he hath made, yf they continue in well doyng to deathe, and yf they will haue none assistance in their owne merites, but loke for rewardes of his bounteous libyalitie.

¶ The .v. Chapter.

The text.

¶ The elders which are among you, I exhort, which am also an elder, and a witness of the afflictions of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall open. For ye suffer for the sake, almusse as I suffer in you, taking the surceyph of thorn, not as compelled thereto, but willingly: after a good conscience, not for þe desire of wylow lucke: but of a good minde, not as though ye were waled out the passion: but that ye be an example to the churches and that with good will. And when the chere of Christ shall appeare, ye shall receiue an incorruptible crowne of glory. Lyken yf ye younges, submit your selues vnto the elder. Submit your selues euery man one to a nother, and your selues together in lowlynes of my noe. For God resisteth the proud, and graunteth grace to the humble.



Exhort your diligence vnto this, brethren, both euery one severally by your selues, and all together in commune, that followinge the footsteps of Christ, you may acceptye vnto his fellowship. Howbest it is reason, þe those, which exceede other in authoritye of age should exceede also in the study of godlynes. Of their example of their maner of teaching, and of their authoritye dependeth the respoue of the multitude. And it is not thought for them, to lye vprightly themselves, excepte they be careful for the multitude also. For vnto them, their grape head augmenteth authoritye, vnto of thinges augmented wylowdome, and long proued & tried vprightenes of lyfe augementeth their credence. You therefore I speake to, you elders, the keepers of the people, beyng an elder also my selfe, which haue perfoymed in mater & in dedes, the thing þe I teache, that is to say, in suffering imprisonmentes & stripes for the name of Christ sake, beyng ready also euen vnto þe crosse, wha the will of God so shall be, & in like maner hauing this very good hope, þe whom he hath vouchesafe to haue suffer for his sake, he will admitte also the same vnto þe fellowship of the gloupe of heauen, as sone as þe day shall come, wherein he shall openly declare his wylowdome vnto the world, & þe wylowdome of þe world being at an ende, þe rewardes shall be brought furthe. I beseeche you for þe tormentes sake þe Christ suffered for you, & for myne afflictions sake, wherein I folowe my lord to myne bittermost power, shew your selues right feders of þe multitude in dede, as it is clauded to euery mans lotte, watche walke about, loke on euery syde, & take heed, þe nothing wante vnto the flocke, for whome Christ died, nether holie consolation, nether holisome doctrine, ne example of gospellyke lyfe. You are called *Superintendentes*: accomplishe in dede þe thing þe you are called, fede, cure, gouerne, kepe, þe nothing perishe, þe nothing runne out of þe way. And see þe you doe þe, not geubgine wylow, as me constrained through feare, either thame, oz necessity of office: but wylow diligent readines, gladly, & wylow a good wil, respectyng nothing elles, but what may be acceptable to god.

It is his balynes that you take in hande, and of him you shall receiue euery thinge rewarde. Loke not for rewarde in this lyfe. It is a harme to take charge of christian people for vauantage sake: whiche charge no man is praysed for to take, but he that dooeth it of his owne accord and frely without any thinge. That man is fallen out of the rewarde of heauen, that hunteth after the hye of his office at mennes handes here in this wo:ld. Next vnto this it is, if any man, though he see naught by lucre, yet seeketh ambitiously after honour and dignite, being despyous to be a commaunder, being desirous to be reuerenced: that man shall haue no rewarde also with God. He hath receiued his rewarde: The office of a right byshop is free of from lo:dinge. It is not a strampe, but an administration. A byshop is put in autoritie for this ende, not to scrape to him selfe the moze gayne thereby, not to reigne a losse, and to vse his pleasure the moze frely, but to doe the moze good. Therefore you elders, remedye your office, behaue your selues so in all thinges, that your lyfe maye be an example vnto the people of a gospellyke conuersation. Let them learne of your behauiour to see naught by lucre, let them learne to helpe dysdeignous wretchednes, let them learne to hope for the hye of their duties dooing at Christes handes, & to haue respecte to none other thing in this wo:ld, but because so it is honed, so is it acceptable to God. In the meane season playe the good Wepherdes frely without any thing. Neuertheles in dede it shall not be doen for nothing: but when the prince of Wepherdes Iesus Christ shall in thappointed daye openly shew forth him selfe, whiche gaue him selfe wholly for his shepe, the keeping wherof he hath committed vnto your credence, than in stede of a vyle & mortal triffing rewarde you shall receiue the glorious crowne of your ductyfe doings, whiche shall neuer fade. Therefore in no wyse take the thing vpon your selues, that you ought to loke for at your princes handes: p:uent not the daye, whiche he woulde haue to be vncertaine vnto vs. And like as it is the parte of suche as be Elders, to shew them selues as fathers vnto the yonger, euen so the yonger ought on the other parte to shew them selues manerly and obedient vnto the elders: and lyke as the Elders submyte them selues throughe gospellyke charitie vnto all men, so thintent they maye doe the moze good, euen so the yong ought not to abuse the gentleness and facilitie of the Elders, but it is rather couenient for them to obey them w: so muche the moze ready diligence, as they abuse the lesse their autoritie. Where true charitie is, there autoritie is nether dysdeynfull nor the yowthe is outragiously feare. He þ is set in dignite, goeth about nothings but this, that he may doe good for other: and he þ is a subiecte, doeth moze of his owne free accord, than he requyret him. Let all men therefore haue gentyll sobrenes fixed vnto in their hartes: and that shall be occasion, that neither the Elders shall be weary of their charge, nor þ yonger greued at their autoritie. God hateth scarce shewenes of Romake in men: his delygth is in lowe mynded hartes, and suche as deteete them selues: he bestoweth his gites vnto them that take nothing vpon them selues: he repelleth & forsaketh þ proude persons, as vnwothy his benefites. Suche as humble them selues, them he aduanceth: and suche as exalte them selues, the he thowteth downe: suche as truste to their owne strengthes, them he doeth not vouchesafe to helpe: and those that dystruste theyr owne powers and depende wholly at his becke, them he chearyfeth and maynteyneth.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle.

157.

Submit your selues therefore vnder the mightie hande of God, that he may exalte you, when the tyme is come. Lay all your care vpon him: for he euer careth for you. He laboureth and watcheth, for your aduersarye the deuyll as a couynge lyon walther aboute, sekyng whom he maye deuoure: whom eysid heo fast in the faithe, knowynge that the same afflictions are appointed vnto your brethren, that are in þe woylde. But the God of all grace whiche hath called vs vnto his eternall glorye by Christ Iesus shall his owne selfe (after that ye haue suffered a lytle affliction) make you perfecter: ferre, strength and stablyshe you. To him be glorye and damntid for euer and euer. Amen. By Adrianus a faithfull brother vnto you (as I suppose) haue I written breuely, exhortynge and restifyng howe that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stande. The congregacion of them whiche at Babylon are companions of your election, saluterh you, and so sauye Marcus my sonne. Here ye see one another with the kynde of loue. Peace be with you at whiche are in Christ Iesu. Amen.

Submitte your selues therfore, not for dreade of men, but because you trust in the mightie hande of God. There is no perill, lesse you shoulde be troden vnder foote perpetually for euer: for he shall aduance and exalte you a losse, when the day of rewardes cometh. Loke not wauntingly about you, haue no distrust, be not astayrd, lest you be tossed in þe loughes of sorowes, as though you were vndefended and set naught by: for he, that is habile in all thinges, and seeth all thinges, hath charge of you, & wil not suffer any thing of you to perishe. It is þe comune custome of youthe to be bet vnto pleasures, vnto ryot, & vnto wantonnesse. But be you sobye, watche you in your myndes, beyng alwayes readily attentue and alwayes circumspecte. For þe aduersarie of your saluacion, þe thurster after mannes destruccion, seapeth not, but walketh aboute lyke an hungrye roaring lion, sekyng in every place whom he maye snarke vnto deuoure: & assaieng by all meanes entraunce vnto you, somtyme sayeng wayte for you by voluptuous pleasures, somtyme openly oppugnyng you by persecucions. Geue not place vnto him, but resiste him with vnsynkinge stronge battes. You wil say: whete haue we power agaynst him that is so mighty? He that hath charge of you, is mightier than he. But all the whole trust of your hartes vpon him, and your aduersaries power shalbe nothyng. Agaynst the faithles, he is strong: but agaynst the faithfull he is feble. If he shoulde assaule this man or that man, perchauce it wight rightly be take for a soye greuous affliction, but now doeth he impugne at the whole flocke of the godly wylke maliciously batted. He persecuteth Christ in you, he enuiceth all mens saluacion, so that the comune affliction of all shalbe the woze casely habile to be borne, & to stande wylke agreeable myndes agaynst the comune enemy. These matters shal shortly haue an ende. Eithen wil God, from whome procedeth all goodnes, leaue you succoutles in the meane season, but wil thoroughly performe the thing that he hath begonnyng in you. He hath geuen you suche Romaches, that for his sake you shoulde not be astayrd to suffer tormetes, wherby he hath called you vnto his glorye that neuer shal haue ende. He will not suffer you to mysse of the victorie: if you wylste manfully, he wil helpe you in your wylstynge, and will gaenpyshe, strength and stablyshe you, that beyng tormeted for a shoyte season, you maye attene the crowne of immortallite. By his ayde we get the victorie, & of his free gyfte we shal receyue the reward. For there is nothing wherin we maye challenge any praysse to our selues: vnto God alone is al glorye due, not onely in this woylde, but also into all ages for euer. Amen. At this present I wil wyte no further vnto you: for of this selfe same mattec, I suppose, I wrote vnto you of late, although in fewe woyses, by Adrianus a faithfull brother, & I doubte not but he deliuered the Epistle well and faithfully. In it I desire and hartily besought you, to perseuer wyl in that which you haue begonnyng: that nothing after

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your mynde. The waye that you haue entred, is the very right true waye vnto saluacion. Thus seeze you haue proceeded forwarde by the goodnes of God. Continue still stedfastly throughte his helppinge ayde, tyll you attayne vnto the victorious rewarde of lyfe that neuer shall dye. The congregation of the christians commende them vnto you, euen the congregacion whome God hath chosen out to himselfe together with you in Babilon, whiche in the myddes of wicked ydolatrious folowe the godlynes of the gospell and in myddes of most fylthie corrupte livers embrace the purities of cleane conuersacion. You are not alone by your selues, God hath his electe in euery place: In bede those are but a very fewe, howbeit they are a synely teped seede to increase the congregacion in tyme commynge more largely. Parke saluteth you, whiche is to me as it were my sonne. Salute you euery one other with a kyss not after the sorte that is geue more custumely than hartely, but with an holy pure, a true christid mynde, which is not doone against the hearte, but is the signe of a chaste and a pure vpright souer, and not a lyeng countrefaite token. And to make an ende of myne Epistle to lyke sorte as I beganne it, Grace and prayce be alwayes present with you al, which being engrassed vnto the bodie of Iesu Christ, true by his spirite, that grace maye couple you vnto God, and peace maye glewe you together with mutual concord: whiche thing God, that is best and most myghty, bypynge to passe. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the
first Epistle of S. Peter
thapostle.

The argument vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter thapostle: by D. Erasmus of Ro- terodame.



This Epistle, as it appeareth, Peter wrote, when he was greatly growe in age, and almost at the pit-tes brinke, for in bede he maketh mention of his death. He writeth generally to all sortes of christians, exhortinge them to purities of lyfe, and by aunient examplis and with the terrour of the laste iudgement frayeng them from fylthines: and he doeth vehemently blame them, whiche corrupte the myndes of the simple with petuerse doctrine,

in denyng the commynge of Christ.

¶ Thus endeth the Argument.